

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 2088

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: NATO OCON MILI AWACS
SUBJ: FUTURE OF NATO AEW

DEPARTMENT FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY HARTMAN
DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS DEFENSE FOR SECRETARY BROWN FROM
AMBASSADOR STRAUSSZ-HUPE

1. IN REFLECTING ON THE NEAR-TERM FUTURE OF NATO AEW, I HAVE
CONCLUDED THAT OUR NEXT STEPS SHOULD BE GUIDED BY TWO PRIME
CRITERIA, WHICH I WOULD LIKE TO OUTLINE FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION.

2. FIRST, IT IS CLEAR TO ME THAT WE SHOULD NOT YET ABANDON
OUR GOAL OF PROMOTING AS MUCH NATO SOLIDARITY AS POSSIBLE
WITH A NATO AWACS PROGRAM. TRUE, THE UK HAS LEFT THE
FOLD, BUT I BELIEVE ALLIES UNDERSTAND THE SINGULAR CIRCUM-
STANCES THAT COMPELLED THE BRITISH DECISION. I AM
CONVINCED THAT THEIR INTEREST IN A FOLLOW UP WILL BE GREATER
IN PROPORTION TO THE EXTENT WE ARE ABLE TO KEEP AS MANY
ALLIES AS POSSIBLE IN THE CONTINENTAL COMPLEMENT TO NIMROD
COVERAGE.

3. SECOND, IT IS EQUALLY CLEAR TO ME THAT WE SHOULD NOT
YET ABANDON EFFORTS TOWARD A NATO AWACS PROGRAM WHICH, WITH
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NIMROD, WILL PROVIDE A SATISFACTORY DEGREE OF ALLIANCE-WIDE
COVERATE. THERE MAY BE AN INCLINATION IN SOME QUARTERS TO RETREAT
TO A SYSTEM CONFINED TO THE CENTRAL REGION, BUT TO MOVE HERE
AND NOW, TO SUCH A PAROCHIAL FALLBACK POSITION IS INADVISABLE.
FIRST, WE SHOULD EXPLORE THE PROSPECTS FOR MEETING THE
MILITARY REQUIREMENT FOR ALL OF NATO-EUROPE. MOREOVER,
SUCH A COMPROMISE WOULD RENDER EUROPEAN EFFORTS TO WORK TOWARD A
COLLABORATIVE SOLUTION WITH US MUCH MORE DIFFICULT, FOR WE WOULD
APPEAR AS WITHDRAWING OUR POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR FULL ACE
COVERAGE AND AS UNDERMINING THOSE IN ALLIED CAPITALS

OUT THE CENTRAL REGION, NOTABLY THE NORWEGIANS, GREEKS AND
TURKS, WHO HAVE SUPPORTED AWACS IN THE FACE OF DOMESTIC OP-
POSITION. AS THIS LAYMAN SEES IT, AWACS CONFINED TO THE CENTER
REGION, VIRTUALLY INVITES LOW LEVEL PENETRATION IN THE UN-
COVERED REGIONS. STRAUZ-HUPE

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